

## **AWARD RIBBONS – BLUE, RED & WHITE**

Have you ever wondered what the ribbons mean that are displayed on the various Fair entries after they have been judged? Sometimes those involved in the Fair just assume that everyone understands and knows that the various colored ribbons designate what placing was awarded for that entry.

At the Gallatin County Fair all youth entries are judged using the Danish System, which simply means that every entry in each “Class” will receive a Blue, a Red, or a White ribbon. There is no magic formula for the number of blue, red or white ribbons to be given. Quality, measured against product standards, and fulfillment of exhibit requirements determine the rankings. The entries are not judged against one another.

### **For the youth, the standard meaning of the ribbons is:**

**Blue** - meets or exceeds product standards and meets exhibit requirements; overall, the work is of high quality.

**Red** - meets minimum product standards and exhibit requirements; overall the work is of average quality.

**White** - serious or considerable deficiencies in meeting product standards and/or exhibit requirements.

**Occasionally**, special awards may be given for an outstanding exhibit.

The adult entries (any item entered by someone 18 years or older) are judged using the American System. This is a rank-order system in which exhibits in each “class” are placed 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. There may also be special categories such as Best Of Show, Grand Champion, etc. While the American system uses product standards and fulfillment of exhibit requirements, it also uses the idea of competition among exhibitors to establish the rankings. In some Classes, there may be only one or two entries and using the American System, one would receive a Blue ribbon (1<sup>st</sup> Place) and the other a Red ribbon (2<sup>nd</sup> Place) even though the product standards may not be of the highest quality. The entries are judged against one another and the best of the entries is awarded first place.

### **For the adults, the standard meaning of the ribbons is:**

**Purple – Grand Champion**

**Pink or Lavender – Reserve Champion**

**Blue – First Place**

**Red – Second Place**

**White – Third Place**

**Yellow – Fourth Place**

**Green – Fifth Place**

Ribbons come in various sizes and shapes. There are “**Flats**” which are the flat ribbons and are used in the Danish System and the American System. There are “**Single Rosettes**” which are a flat ribbon with the addition of a rosette at the top. These may be used the same way the “Flats” are used or may be used to indicate a special award. A “**Double Rosette**” has two flats joined by a rosette at the top and a “**Triple Rosette**” has three flats joined by a rosette. Usually, the rosettes are used to designate higher awards – a Purple Triple may designate the “Best of Show” in the Foods Department.

In some of the children’s games, contests, and exhibits, the Participation System is used. This system recognizes an exhibitor's participation in an event or contest, usually without regard to the quality of the exhibit or competition among the exhibitors. Participation ribbons are awarded and are normally all the same color.

Now as you look at the various exhibits and see all the ribbons, they will have new meaning for you. The Exhibitor’s take great pride in their awards and if you know someone who has entered be sure to congratulate them and watch the local newspapers for the judging results. You just may see your neighbor’s name and the fact that he/she placed first in the Photography Department at the Fair. Maybe next year you will be the winner of a Purple Rosette. Its kind of like winning the lottery – you have to enter if you want to win the prize!